

EXECUTIVE ORDER

December 3, 2003

03-17

ESTABLISHING THE GOVERNOR'S INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS

WHEREAS, the total number of individuals served at emergency shelters in Rhode Island last year was 5,440, of that total number 1,692 were children typically under the age of five (5); and

WHEREAS, the numbers represent a 23% increase and a 34% increase over the previous year of the total number of individuals and children served at emergency shelters; and

WHEREAS, many more individuals and families with children living in Rhode Island are homeless and often seek shelter in abandoned buildings, automobiles or live out side; and

WHEREAS, existing emergency shelters for individuals and families with children throughout Rhode Island are currently over capacity and cannot accommodate the emergency shelter needs for this population; and

WHEREAS, the availability and accessibility of safe emergency shelters are critical issues to the safety and well being of homeless individuals and families with children; and

WHEREAS, homelessness has become more chronic in the State of Rhode Island as affordable housing becomes increasingly difficult to obtain; and the effects of such chronic homelessness adversely impacts the State's general public welfare and economy; and

WHEREAS, the State's significant interest in developing effective strategies and solutions to address the problems of homelessness including making provisions for the availability and use of temporary emergency housing requires collaboration and coordination of resources at all levels of government, and with community, volunteer and faith-based organizations, as well as businesses;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, DONALD L. CARCIERI, by the virtue of the power vested in me as Governor of the State of Rhode Island, do hereby order as follows:

1. There is hereby established the Governor's Interagency Council on Homelessness to examine problems associated with homelessness and to develop and implement strategies and programs for assuring a coordinated, effective response to reduce homelessness in Rhode Island.
2. The Interagency Council shall:
 - a. Examine the current status of homelessness in Rhode Island;
 - b. Coordinate services for the homeless among state agencies and instrumentalities, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, volunteer organizations, advocacy groups and businesses;
 - c. Identify and seek to remedy gaps in services, specifically in the area of making provisions for the availability and use of temporary emergency housing; and
 - d. Develop strategies and recommendations to address the wide range of problems associated with chronic homelessness that will serve to reduce the number of homeless individuals and families in Rhode Island.
3. The Chair of the Housing Resources Commission shall chair the Governor's Interagency Council on Homelessness. Interagency Council members shall include: the Director of Human Services or designee; the Director of the Emergency Management Agency or designee; the Director of the Department of Health or designee; the Director of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families or designee; the Director of the Department of Elderly Affairs or designee; the Director of the Department of Mental health, Retardation & Hospitals or designee; the Director of the Department of Labor and Training or designee; the Director of the Department of Corrections or designee; the Commissioner of the Department of Education or designee; the Director of the Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation ;and a representative of the Governor's office.
4. The Interagency Council shall meet regularly and shall report to the Governor its findings and recommendations for reducing chronic homelessness and improving services to Rhode Island's homeless individuals and families. All members shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor.

This Executive Order shall take effect immediately upon the date hereof and shall remain in effect through June 30, 2004.

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So Ordered:

Donald L. Carcieri

Date